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SUBJECT: KABILA'S MILITARY STATUS CLARIFIED

11. (U) The debate over President Kabila's military status has been clarified following the publication of an official government decree accepting Kabila's voluntary resignation from the Congolese Army. The decree, signed March 15 by Kabila himself, was not made public until it appeared in the April 1 edition of the DRC's "Official Journal," the country's authorized publisher of official government texts. Kabila originally tendered his resignation as "Major General" of the Armed Forces March 14, 2005.

12. (U) The controversy surrounding Kabila's status began following challenges by several political opposition parties to Kabila's candidacy for president. According to the DRC's electoral law, no member of the armed forces or the police may run for elected office. The opposition parties charged before the Supreme Court that because Kabila had not officially resigned his military commission (which had also not been officially accepted), he was therefore ineligible to run for president. The revelation of the March 15, 2006, decree effectively ends this debate.

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